

# Bondage

What is bondage? Bondage is the oppression of an individual or a group of people by another, to whom they are subservient (Exodus 1:14, 2:23, Hebrews 2:14-15).

When one is in bondage, they are not able of their strength and might to deliver themselves out of it. Thus, one who is in bondage needs someone else who is mightier, who is not in the bondage that they are in, to free them from their bondage.

When we read of the children of Israel in the Old Testament, it is evident that they were in bondage to the Egyptians (Exodus 2:23-25). The children of Israel were under physical, or natural, bondage - wherein the Egyptians made their lives bitter with affliction, hard labor, and oppression, and their servitude to the Egyptians was with rigor (Exodus 1:14, Deuteronomy 26:7). The natural bondage that the children of Israel were under towards the Egyptians was a reflection of the spiritual bondage that man is under to sin. In the same manner that the children of Israel, being in bondage under the Egyptians, served them, likewise man, being in bondage to sin, are servants of it (John 8:34, Romans 6:16-20).

It might be asked, if the children of Israel, as a result of being in bondage to the Egyptians, suffered affliction, hard labor, and oppression, what does man suffer from if it is in bondage to sin? Man, being in bondage to sin, suffers from darkness and iniquity: which result in affliction, hard labor, oppression, perversion, malice, variance, hatred, sickness, and all other ungodly and unrighteous acts that bring evil, despair, and death with them (Jeremiah 30:15, Psalm 107:8-11, Deuteronomy 28:15-68, Judges 4:1-3, Proverbs 22:7, 28:15, 29:7, Galatians 5:19-21). The evil and despair that are prevalent in the world are the result of sin, though many are too

blind to see it. Yea, when an individual, a nation, or a people reject God and follow after iniquity and darkness, only death and destruction awaits them.

After the disobedience of Adam in the garden of Eden, sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned (Romans 5:12). Since all men are born in sin and formed in iniquity from conception (Psalm 51:5), one is brought under bondage to sin from their birth. As the children of Israel could not free themselves from their bondage under the Egyptians, for the Egyptians were mightier than them, they would have, barring outside intervention, continued to be in bondage for the rest of their lives. In like manner also is man unable to free themselves from their bondage to sin, being that they are born sinners from birth, and would, barring outside intervention, continue to be in bondage to sin for the rest of their lives. Thus, as the children of Israel needed a savior mightier than the Egyptians to save them from their bondage under the Egyptians, so did man also need a savior who was righteous and perfect, being sinless and thus not being in bondage to sin, to save him from his bondage to sin.

The children of Israel needed a deliverer, and God became their Savior (Psalm 106:21, Isaiah 43:3). Through mighty signs and wonders, by the hand of his servant Moses: his chosen (Numbers 16:5, Psalm 106:23), the LORD delivered his people from the Egyptians, from the house of bondage (Exodus 13:3-14, Deuteronomy 26:8, Psalm 105:26-27). As it is written: the LORD declares the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done (Isaiah 46:10). Thus, by delivering the children of Israel from their bondage under the Egyptians through his servant Moses, the LORD God foreshadowed how he would also deliver man from his bondage to sin through his servant, his only begotten Son, Jesus Christ: whom the LORD declared to be his chosen, his elect, his Holy One, in whom his soul delighteth, and upon whom he hath put his spirit; whom he formed

from the womb to be his servant, to be unto the Gentiles a light, that he may be his salvation unto the end of the earth (Isaiah 42:1, 43:10, 49:5-7).

Jesus Christ, as Moses was sent unto the children of Israel to deliver them from the Egyptians (Exodus 3:7-10), was sent into the world to deliver sinners from their sins (Matthew 1:21, 1 Timothy 1:15). For deliverance is only necessary when one is in bondage and needs to be freed from it. Moses was sent unto his people with signs and wonders, showing the people of Israel that the LORD God had chosen him to lead them and deliver them from the hand of the Egyptians (Exodus 4:1-9, Isaiah 63:12). So also was Jesus sent unto his people, who showed them mighty signs and wonders, declaring unto them that he was their Messiah, the chosen of God, who would be their shepherd and save them from their sins (John 10:11, Matthew 18:11, 16:15-17, Luke 9:56, Acts 2:22-38).

By great miracles and acts, the LORD delivered the children of Israel from their bondage through his servant Moses: in particular, the dividing of the Red Sea, in which the children of Israel crossed to the other side; but the Egyptians, who were in pursuit, perished (Exodus 14:21-30); and likewise also by a great miracle and act did the LORD deliver man from his bondage to sin through his servant and Son Jesus: resurrecting him from the dead to be the captain of salvation: through his precious blood which was shed for the remission of sins, to those who would obey his gospel (Romans 3:22-26, Ephesians 1:5-8, Hebrews 2:10, Matthew 26:28, Romans 1:16, Acts 2:38). The children of Israel, having crossed the Red Sea – which was a baptism of water and of the Spirit (1 Corinthians 10:2), forsook their old lives, wherein they were in bondage and servants to the Egyptians, and began a new life of freedom from their bondage, that they should no longer serve the Egyptians, but instead serve God (Exodus 9:1, Leviticus 26:13, Exodus 14:13). Likewise, those who obey the gospel of Christ, being born of water and of the Spirit, are new creatures in Christ: and the old man, who

was in bondage to sin, is crucified with him - that henceforth we should not serve sin, but be servants of righteousness (2 Corinthians 5:17, Romans 6:6-18).

The LORD, having delivered Israel from the house of bondage through water and blood: the slaying of the firstborns in Egypt, wherein the children of Israel applied the blood of a lamb without blemish so that the destroyer would pass over them; and the crossing of the Red Sea (Exodus 12:21-27, Exodus 14:21-30), purchased them and was an husband unto them (Exodus 15:16, Psalm 74:2, Jeremiah 31:32). In like manner, Jesus came by water and blood to deliver his people from their sins - being baptized by John the Baptist in the Jordan River; and shedding his blood on the cross (1 John 5:6, Matthew 3:13-18, Luke 12:50). Moreover, at his cross, having given up the ghost and put to rest, when pierced at his side, forthwith came there out blood and water; this signaling the purchase of his bride, the Church (John 19:34-35, Acts 20:28, 2 Corinthians 11:2, Genesis 2:21-23).

The children of Israel were commanded to love the LORD their God (Deuteronomy 6:5): for he first loved them and redeemed them from the house of bondmen to be a peculiar people unto him (Deuteronomy 7:7-8, Exodus 19:5, Deuteronomy 14:2). So also do we, the Church of Christ, love the LORD our God, for he first loved us and sent his Son into the world to die for sinners, the just for the unjust, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works (1 John 4:19, Romans 5:8, 1 Peter 3:18, Titus 2:14).

The children of Israel saw the great work that the LORD had done to save them out of the hand of the Egyptians, seeing the Egyptians whom they had been in bondage to, dead upon the seashore; and they believed the LORD, and his servant Moses (Exodus 14:30-31). The LORD, through water and by his Spirit, washed away the Egyptians, to whom Israel was in bondage to (Exodus 14:26-29, 15:4, Psalm 106:9-11) - this being a

foreshadowing to how the LORD, to those who would obey the gospel of Christ, would wash away the sins of man, freeing them from their bondage to sin. The Egyptians were dead to the Israelites: for they would see them no more. In like manner, those who are in Christ are dead to sin: for they no longer live in it (Romans 6:1-2,11). As the children of Israel believed the LORD and his servant Moses, having seen the work that he did to save them, so also do we believe the LORD and his servant Jesus, having read of the work he did to save us. And though not all of us have seen with our eyes the great work the LORD did to save us from our sins, we do read of it in his holy word and believe it; and as our Lord Jesus said:

“Jesus saith unto him, Thomas, because thou hast seen me, thou hast believed: blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believed.”

(John 20:29)

It is written that the things that happened to the children of Israel in the wilderness were written for our admonition (1 Corinthians 10:11) so that we may refrain from repeating the same errors that they made. Though the LORD delivered the children of Israel from the house of bondage, when they entered the wilderness to get to the land of Canaan, which God promised unto their forefathers, some dissented and provoked the LORD God, doubting his words, and desired to return to Egypt, back to the house of bondage (Exodus 14:1-13, Numbers 14:4). Why did some desire to return to the bondage from which they were freed? Was it not because of unbelief? For if they had believed, then they would have hearkened unto the voice of the LORD and not have desired to depart from him. But why did some not believe? Had they not seen the great work that the LORD had done to free them from their bondage? Even so, because they feared death, their hearts were still in bondage to the Egyptians and thus desired to return (Exodus 16:3, Numbers 14:2, 21:5). More ever, they cared not for the Light that

came unto them to save them but still loved their bondage. How so? For it is written:

“No man can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon.”

(Matthew 6:24)

Those of the children of Israel who did not believe desired not to serve the LORD who had saved them but instead desired to serve the Egyptians (Exodus 7:16, Exodus 14:12, Numbers 14:3-4). Thus, they hated the LORD their Savior and instead loved the house of bondage. Because they rejected the Light, they remained in darkness and were blind, not being able to see the land of promise that the LORD had promised unto their forefathers – for had their eyes been opened to see it, then they would have desired to enter therein. As the unbelieving of the children of Israel in the wilderness rejected the Light: caring more for the lust of the flesh (Exodus 16:3, 17:3, Numbers 21:5), so do many of the unbelieving in these last days reject the Light: loving the darkness rather than light, for their deeds are evil (John 3:19). Many today do not truly desire to serve the Lord Jesus but instead still desire to serve sin: wanting to fulfill the lusts of their flesh and attach themselves to the things of this world which fade away. These are still in bondage to sin and thus are in the darkness and are blind, not being able to see the kingdom of God. And since they cannot see the kingdom of God, they have no desire to enter therein. For if they could see, then they would desire to obey the gospel of Christ in order to enter into the kingdom of God; for it is written:

“Jesus answered, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God.”

(John 3:5)

And,

“Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost.”

(Acts 2:38)

But thanks be to God, who sent his only begotten Son into the world: who took part of flesh and blood, that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil; and deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage (Hebrews 2:14-15). Thus, to those who have obeyed the gospel of his Son Jesus, hath he delivered them from the power of darkness (Colossians 1:13); that they may no longer have the fear of death in them, but instead the hope of the resurrection. For those that have obeyed his gospel are born of water and of the Spirit – having their sins remitted and Christ in them, the hope of glory, and can hope, knowing that he which raised up the Lord Jesus shall also raise them up by Jesus (2 Corinthians 4:13-14). For those that have obeyed the gospel of Christ are baptized into Christ, and thus also into his death; therefore, being planted together in the likeness of his death, they shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection (Romans 6:3-5).

We who are Christ's are servants of righteousness and not of sin; we walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. Let us learn from the errors of the children of Israel in the wilderness, and not provoke our Lord Jesus by desiring to return to the bondage from which we were freed, but instead to let go of our old man, who is crucified with him, and walk in righteousness. Let us continue to love him and remain faithful to him; for at the end, those that are with him are called, and chosen, and faithful. Amen.